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RAGGEDY ANN'S SECRET

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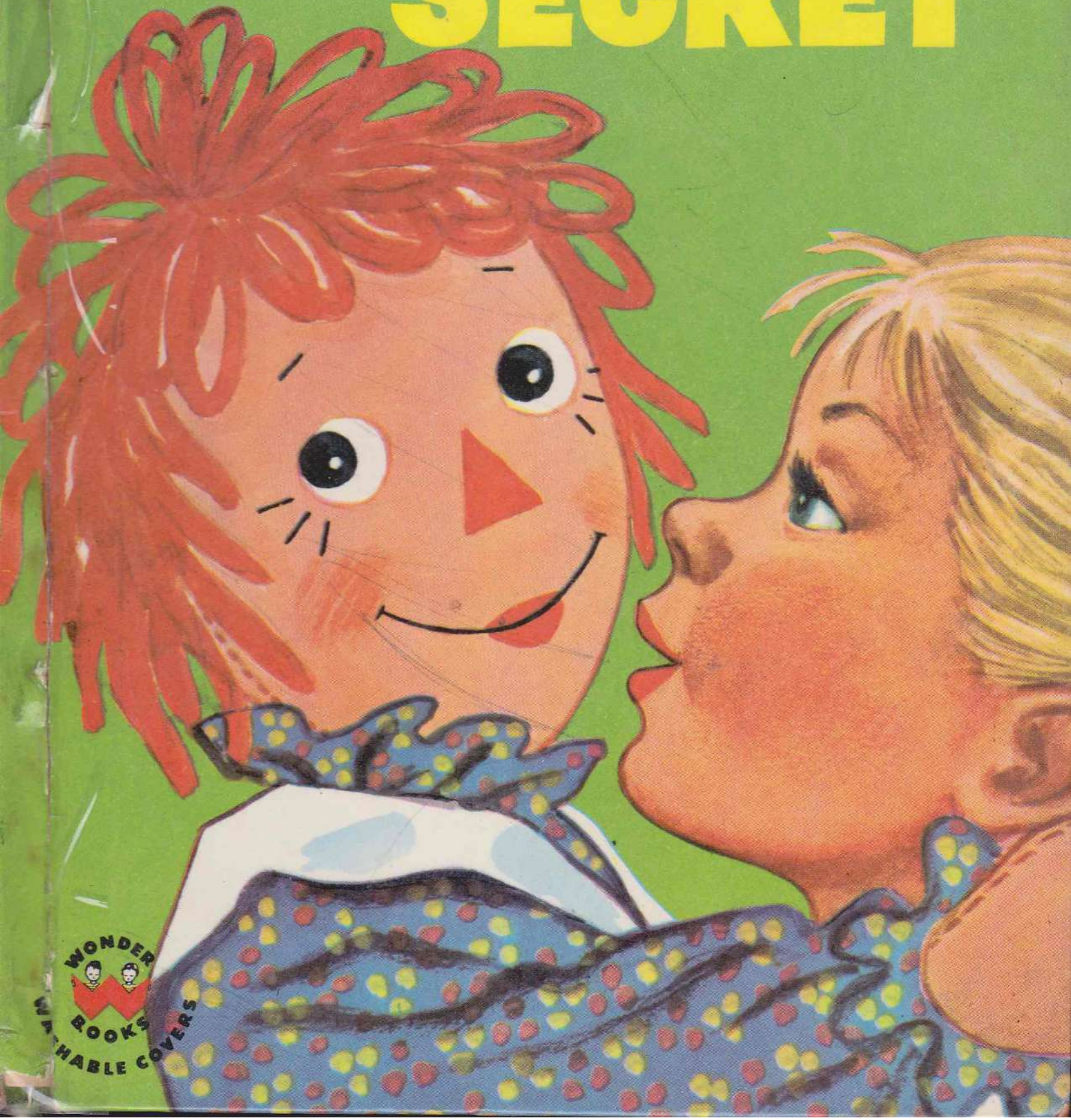

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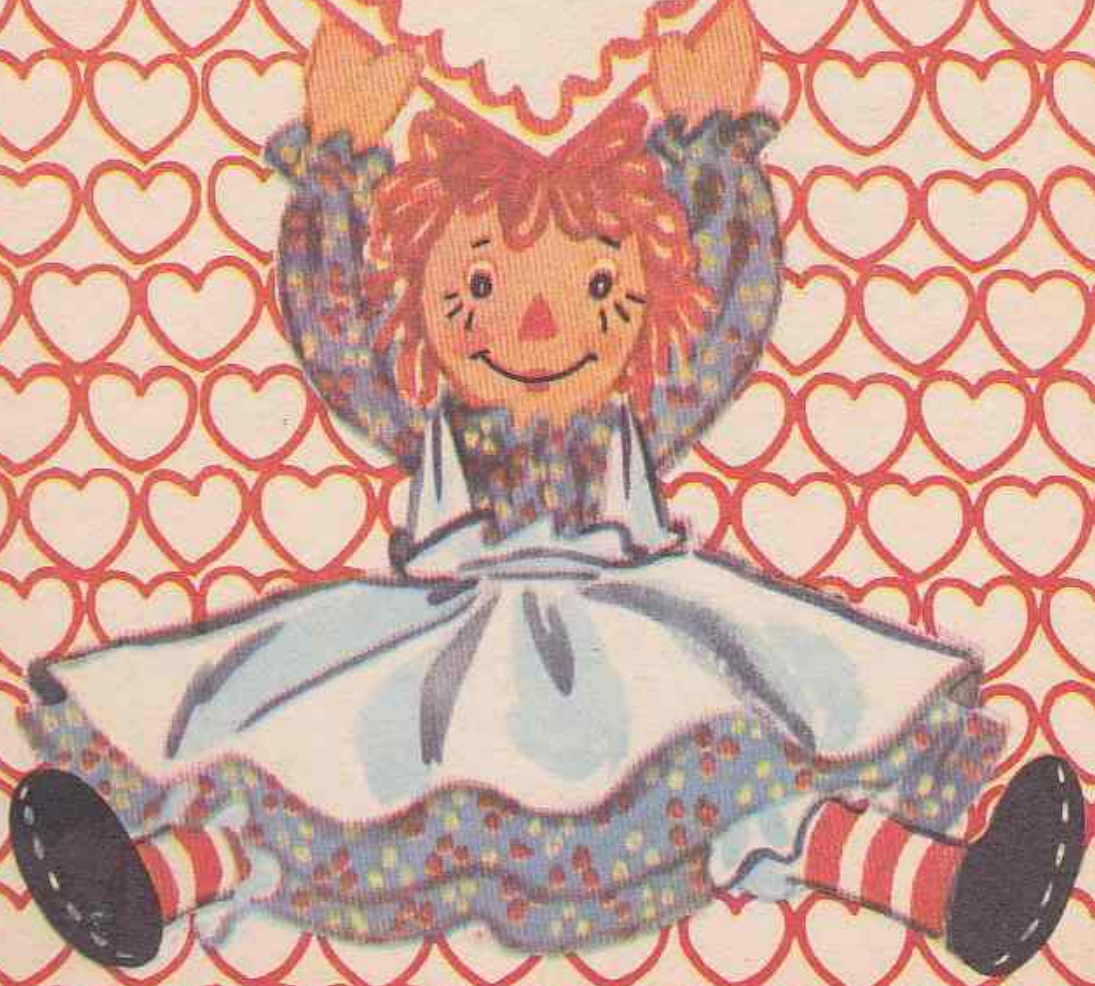

RAGGEDY ANN'S SECRET

By JOHNNY GRUELLE

Pictures by
RUTH WOOD

WONDER BOOKS • NEW YORK

This book is based on the famous *Raggedy Ann* and *Raggedy Andy* characters and is especially designed for very little folk. When the little folk are a little older they will want to read, as their fathers and mothers did, the wonderful stories, many times longer than this, just as they were written and illustrated by Johnny Gruelle. The Johnny Gruelle Company, of New York, are the publishers of the original *Raggedy Ann* and *Raggedy Andy* and other Johnny Gruelle publications with pictures in color and black and white.

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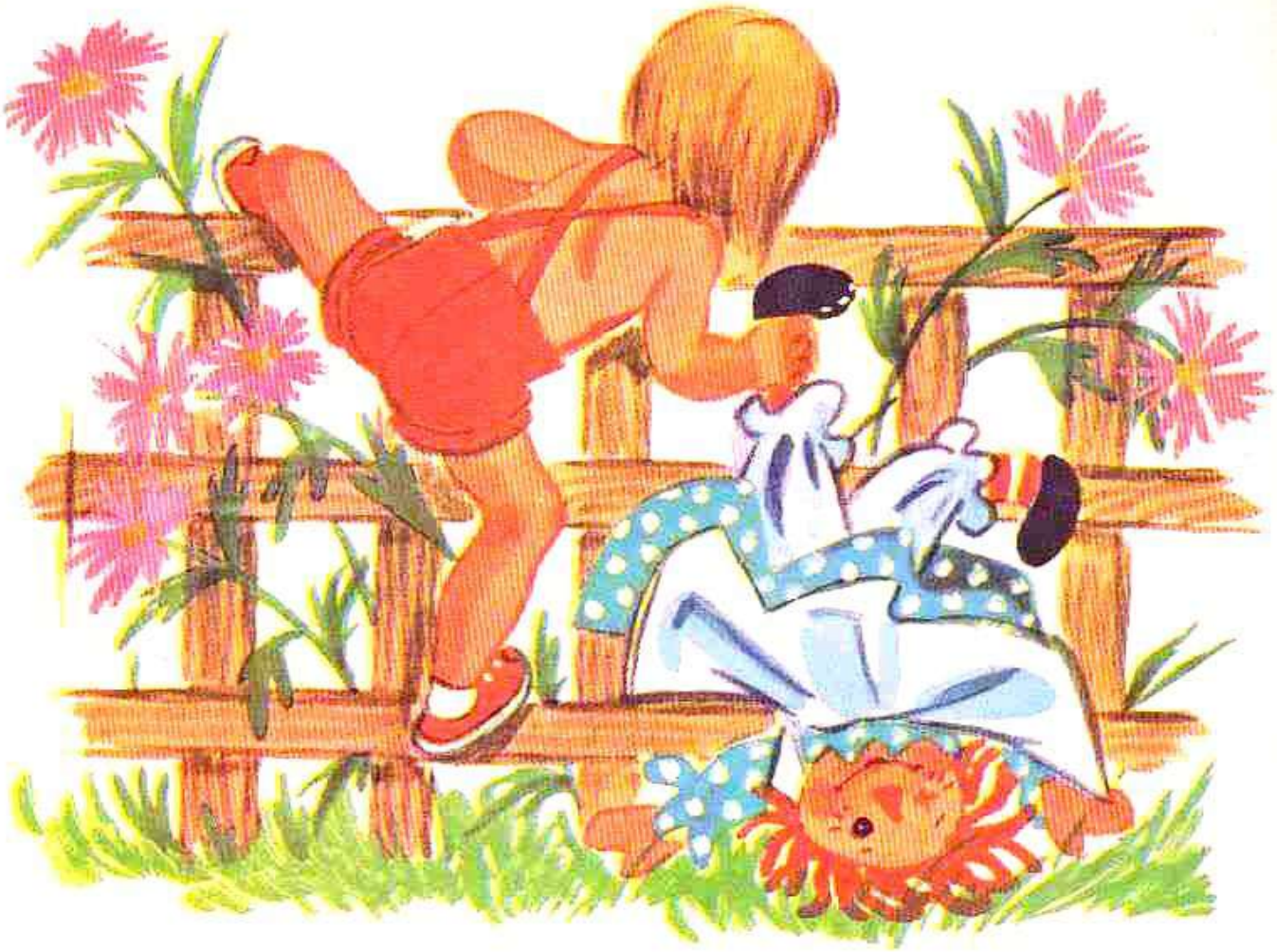
MARCELLA waved good-by to her dolls. They were looking out the nursery window just where Marcella had placed them that morning. "I'm going to visit Grandma for the weekend," she told them. "Be good dollies and when I come back we'll have a party."

Marcella waved to them all again — all except Raggedy Ann who had left to spend the weekend with Marcella's friend Betsy. And Betsy had just disappeared around the side of the house carrying Raggedy Ann.

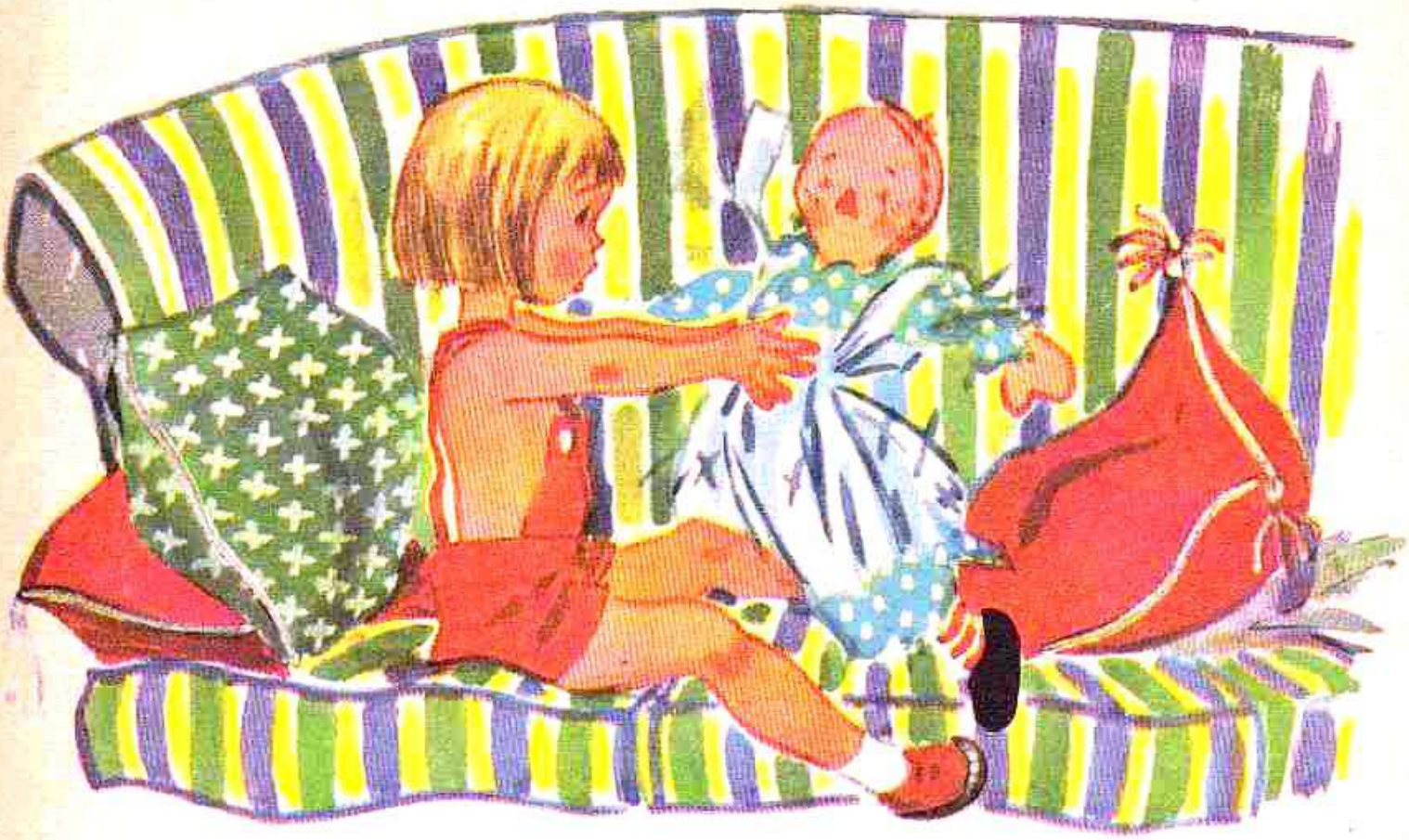


Betsy was a careless little girl who didn't pay enough attention to her guests. She raced across the lawn and climbed over the fence, dragging the little rag doll after her. Pop! Raggedy Ann lost a shoebutton eye.

Over the hill and through the berry bushes Betsy ran, holding Raggedy Ann by one foot. Pop! There went the other shoebutton eye, and two berry bushes later, when Betsy wriggled across a fallen tree trunk, it scraped the painted smile right off Raggedy's face.

After another hop and skip, Raggedy Ann's red yarn hair caught on a twig. Betsy didn't even stop to look. She gave a yank and Raggedy Ann's head was suddenly bare.

Goodness knows what might have happened to Raggedy's feelings if it hadn't been for her candy heart with I LOVE YOU written on it.



Betsy rushed into her house and threw herself on the sofa. One look at Raggedy Ann was enough to make her squeal. This higgledy piggledy doll wasn't the doll she had carried from Marcella's house! Except for a red three-cornered nose, this doll had no face and no hair, and her clothes were all tattered and torn. Betsy was quite sorry. What would Marcella say when she returned?

Whatever was she to do? Why, she did what all little girls do when they're in trouble. She went straight to her mother and told her the whole story. Her mother listened quietly and said what all mothers say: "We'll try to fix it."

Now Betsy's mother had never seen Raggedy Ann before and Betsy had been so careless that she couldn't remember exactly how Marcella's doll had looked. So, instead of merry, twinkling shoebuttons for eyes, they sewed on two black buttons without one single twinkle between them.

And instead of a merry grin, Betsy's mother painted on a teeny-weeny mouth that wasn't even smiling. And, as if this weren't enough, Betsy attached some stringy yellow thread to the very top of Raggedy's head and made a skinny yellow braid on either side.

Then she dressed Raggedy Ann in an old pair of blue pants which had once belonged to a boy-doll that she had left out in the rain one night, and a striped purple shirt with a patch in it. At last Betsy was ready to take Raggedy Ann home to Marcella.

Marcella's mother was busy in the kitchen when Betsy arrived and she didn't notice that the little girl was hiding something behind her back. "Marcella is upstairs in the nursery," she said, and Betsy scooted up the back stairs. But no one was in the nursery except the dolls who were still sitting on the window seat.

Betsy placed Raggedy Ann in a little red rocking chair and went to look for Marcella. As soon as she left and the dolls were quite sure they were alone, because you know they never speak in front of people, they turned around and looked at the strange new doll.

"Who in the world is that?" whispered Cleety the Clown, poking Raggedy Andy in his cotton-stuffed ribs. "She is certainly not very pretty."

"Sh!" whispered Raggedy Andy. "She might hear you and it would hurt her feelings."

"Anyway, it isn't how you look that's important," Uncle Clem, the wise old Scotch doll said. "It's the kind heart you have that counts."

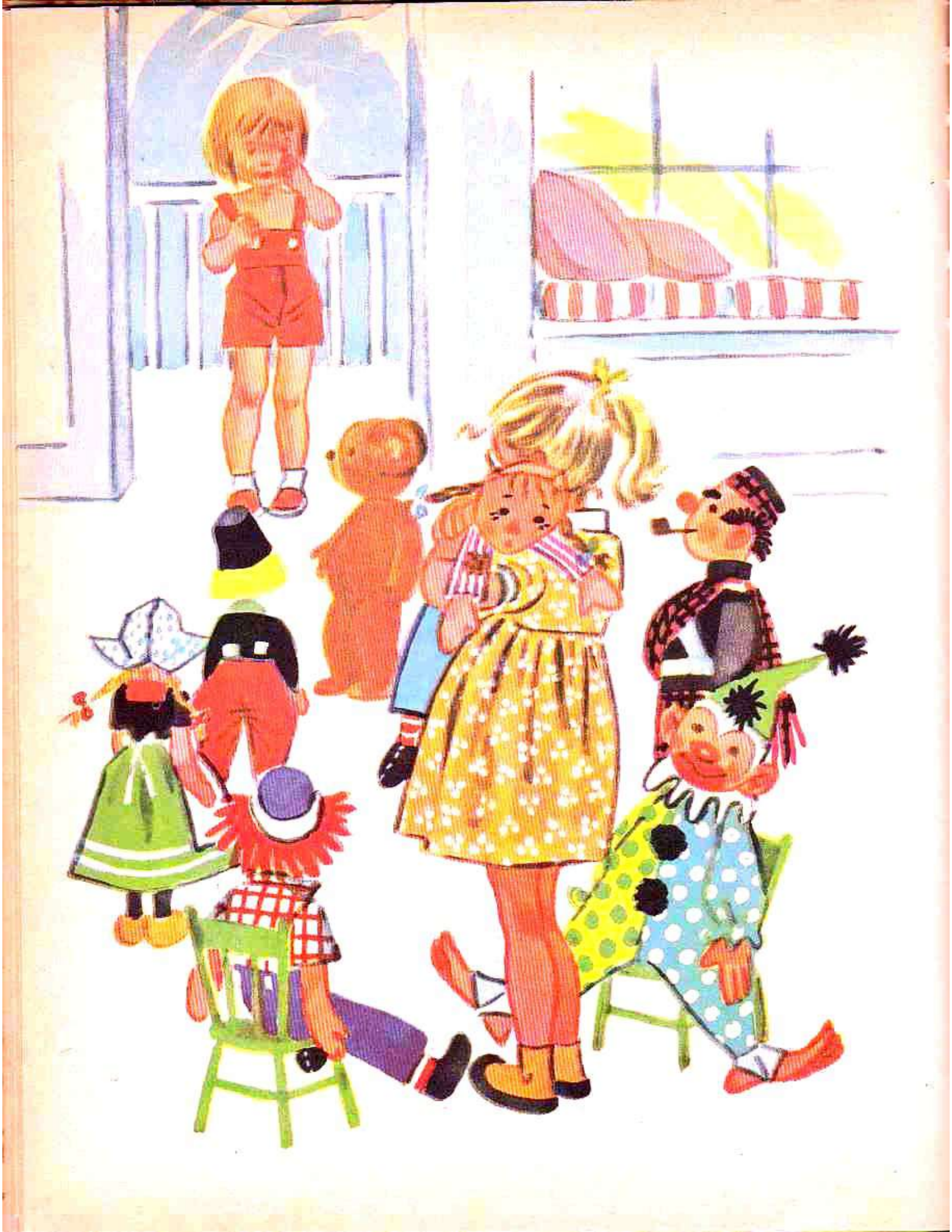
"She seems very sad," said Cleety. "Perhaps I can do some tricks that will make her laugh."

"Or we can dance for her," said Fredericka and Henny, the Dutch dolls.

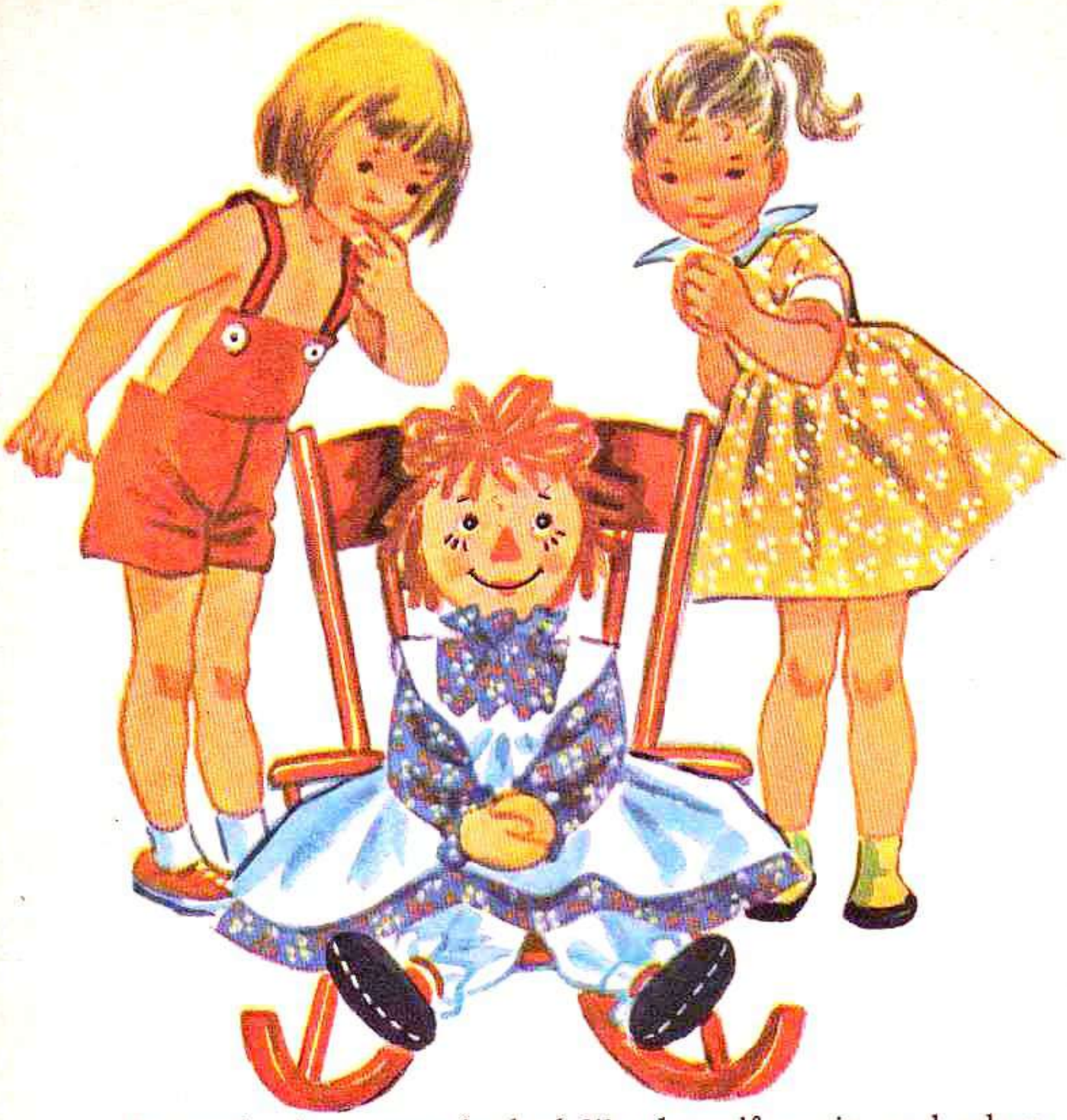
How kind they were! Raggedy Ann could hear them perfectly well, but she couldn't say a word, poor thing, for her teeny-weeny mouth was too small for even a whisper.

Now, while Betsy was looking for Marcella in front of the house, Marcella came up the back stairs to the nursery. Of course, she didn't recognize Raggedy Ann for a single moment, but she loved all dolls, so she picked her up and rocked her gently. "I know who you are," Marcella said. "You're the surprise that Grandma sent home for me. You shall be my Tilly Tolly Dolly. And when Raggedy Ann comes home, we'll have a tea party with marshmallows and sugar-water tea."

Marcella gave the poor lumpy bumpy Tilly Tolly a great big bear hug. But suddenly Marcella stopped. "You're not Tilly Tolly!" she cried. "You're my own Raggedy Ann! But what has happened to your face? And what has happened to your hair? And where did you get all those lumps, you poor dear child?"



Just then Betsy came in. With tears and sighs the story of her carelessness came pouring out. Marcella forgave her, of course, for Betsy was truly sorry. While both little girls were talking, and all the dolls were sitting politely, being glad about Raggedy Ann and everything, Marcella's mother tiptoed in and took Tilly Tolly away with her. She headed straight for her work basket.



Raggedy Ann soon looked like herself again and when all the dolls were at the tea party to celebrate, Betsy asked Marcella a question that had been bothering her. "How did you know it was Raggedy Ann?"

Marcella smiled. "When I hugged Tilly Tolly I could feel the candy heart and no one has a candy heart with I LOVE YOU written on it but Raggedy Ann." Then she leaned over and patted Raggedy's soft wool head and offered her another cup of sugar-water tea.

Oh, yes, Raggedy Ann is home again. But there's a special sparkle in her eye and a loving curve to her smile now, for Raggedy Ann knows a secret that the Tilly Tolly Dolly and Uncle Clem taught her.

It really truly doesn't matter how you look — it's the kind heart you have that counts — and if you aren't sure, a loving hug will prove it. And surely, it was a loving hug that brought Raggedy Ann home.

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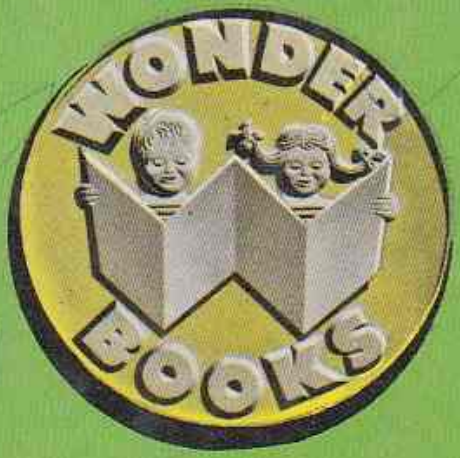

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